

Amendments

In the Claims:

Please amend claims 1, 4, 16, 18, 19 and 20; cancel claims 3 and 17; and add new claims 24 and 25.

1. (Amended) A method of processing tobacco dust which develops in the course of the making of tobacco-containing products, comprising the steps of:

A¹
gathering the dust; and

processing gathered dust into particles having sizes greater than the average size of dust, wherein said processing step includes agglomerating gathered dust into said particles.

A²
4. (Amended) The method of claim 1, wherein said agglomerating step includes compacting gathered dust.

A³
16. (Amended) Apparatus for processing tobacco dust which develops in the course of the making of tobacco-containing products, comprising;
means for gathering the dust; and
means for processing gathered dust into particles having sizes greater than the average size of dust, wherein said processing means includes means for agglomerating gathered dust into said particles.

18. (Amended) The apparatus of claim 16, wherein said agglomerating means includes means for converting dust into particles with the application of pressure.

19. (Amended) The apparatus of claim 16, further comprising means for comminuting at least the particles having sizes exceeding a predetermined size.

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20. (Amended) A machine for making smokers' products, comprising:
means for establishing a supply of comminuted smokable material including tobacco dust;
means for segregating the dust from the supply and for agglomerating the segregated dust into tobacco-containing particles;
means for converting the dedusted supply into smokers' products; and
means for admitting the particles to the dedusted supply.

24. (New) The method of claim 1, wherein the processing step does not include extruding the gathered dust into said particles.

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25. (New) The method of claim 1, wherein the processing step gathers the dust into particles of dust with sizes of between about 1 mm to about 3 mm.